



The SPS Connection

May/June 2005

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Colonel's Corner

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Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, E-Business Conference - Orlando, Florida



The SPS Socket

Help us plan for the next SPS joint users' conference! Visit the [COE](#) and share your preferences by filling out the SPS JPMO Conference Survey. For example, in your opinion, what is the ideal month to hold the next conference?

- ☐ January 2006
☐ February 2006
☐ March 2006
☐ April 2006



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Ask the Editor

We've opened a new section in the newsletter for you, the readers ...

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Click [here](#) to send your SPS-related comments, questions or issues to SPS Desk Officers.

The SPS Connection welcomes all articles, photos and letters from SPS users and the community at large. Please send your input to [The SPS Connection Editor](#).

The SPS Connection is the Official SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) newsletter, published on-line every two months by the SPS JPMO to provide SPS users with information about the program, policies, technical developments, operations, trends and ideas of and about SPS.

Colonel's Corner: V4.2.2 Deployment Update

As many of you are aware, our number-one goal this year is to deliver Version 4.2 Increment 2 (v4.2.2) — our most functional version yet — to all 800 Standard Procurement System (SPS) user sites worldwide.

Increment 2 has several updates that truly make it our most user-friendly software package yet. To name a few:

- Adapter technology allows SPS to seamlessly integrate with more than 32 systems across the Department's financial, logistics and accounting domains, reducing the time it takes to interface with external systems
- The new Integrity Tool indicates mistakes in data fields in time for users to correct them before they cause problems later in the process
- V4.2.2 improves the document generation process and gives users the option to generate a PDF file

V4.2.2 greatly increases our ability to have an end-to-end procurement process in the Department of Defense, and sites from all components are making the upgrade a priority.

Leading the transition to Increment 2 among the Services is the Navy, with 98 percent of



all Navy and Marine Corps sites already upgraded. The Navy team is also on track to have everyone on the same version of SPS in the near future. To find out more about the Navy's success with the upgrade, read the [feature article](#) in this issue.

The Other Defense Agencies are also moving forward with the upgrade, with several sites already on the new version. The Defense Threat Reduction Agency transitioned with ease to the new version and [shares its story](#) in this issue.

The Army and the Air Force are actively participating in training for the new version and testing in preparation to begin upgrading sites in the near future.

V4.2.2 Deployment Update [continued]

SPS Is Part of Upcoming DPAP, EB Conference

On a side note, we're getting ready to head to Orlando, Fla., for the Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, E-Business (DPAP, EB) Conference, where SPS will be a featured E-Business solution. We'll talk about the benefits our program brings to the Acquisition Domain in a breakout session. Additionally, during a breakout session on meeting Warfighter needs, I'll talk about what SPS has done to support officers in contingency missions. I encourage your participation in this worthwhile event. Details can be found on the [DPAP, EB Web site](#).

I hope to see members of our user community at the event and certainly encourage you to consider attending.

— Jacob N. Haynes, COL, AC, Standard Procurement System Program Manager



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Service Talk

From the SPS Desk Officers to You!

This is the place to hear directly from the SPS Desk Officers! These are the folks responsible for SPS' success in your component.

From conference announcements and breaking news, to kudos and status updates, Service Talk is where you'll find important news from the Desk Officers.

[Army](#) | [Navy/USMC](#) | [Air Force](#)
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Service Talk: Army Keep Your Database Safe

Situations Beyond Your Control Can Bring Down PD² Capabilities

Your heart sinks, your head spins and when you swallow your frustration it's tinged with the taste of adrenaline. Make no mistake about it — your server is down. No matter how careful and protective you are about your server, situations outside of the control of even the best System Administrator can arise that bring down an office's Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²) contracting capability. Anything from a natural disaster to terrorist activity can throw a wrench in the most well-maintained server in the Standard Procurement System (SPS) community, possibly leading to catastrophic loss of data. The best way to battle the unknown is to develop and maintain sound database planning procedures. The following are some basic guidelines:

Backups:

- Back up ALL of your databases every night! This will minimize data loss, should it become necessary to restore some or all databases from a backup
- Review your Sybase backup log daily to verify that the previous night's dump process completed successfully



U.S. Army Pfc. Ray Brownlee stands a night watch at Forward Operating Base Hotel as a storm rapidly approaches Najaf, Iraq, on April 26. Brownlee is attached to Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 198th Armor Regiment, 155th Brigade Combat Team.

- DO NOT overwrite your backups every day. It is HIGHLY recommended that sites maintain at least one week's worth of viable database backups at all times
- Use a high-density tape device to store (at least a copy of) your daily dumps. This will prevent a catastrophic loss should your server encounter hard-disk failure. Offsite storage locations are ideal for storing tape backups to prevent loss in the event of a natural disaster

Service Talk: Army [continued]

- If your site has a test database, verify the integrity of your backups by loading the previous night's production database dump into the test environment. The test database doesn't need to be backed up nightly, since it's simply a replica of the production
- Automate your backup process to run via a *Windows Scheduled Task*, so it will never be overlooked. Do not hesitate to contact the SPS Help Desk with any questions regarding backups — no question is too small, since this is the single, most-important job of a System Administrator

DBCC's (Database Consistency Checks):

- Automate your daily and weekly DBCC scripts to run via *Windows Scheduled Tasks*, so they will never be overlooked
- Check your daily and weekly DBCC outputs for any errors. Report any errors to the SPS Help Desk IMMEDIATELY. Do not wait for the next DBCC to run or assume the problem will go away
- Small inconsistencies can snowball into larger problems, including widespread corruption, if not immediately addressed

Server/Database Space:

- It is recommended that sites verify the amount of free space remaining on their production databases on a weekly basis at minimum
- If the database becomes full, users

will be unable to work, causing unnecessary downtime

- To monitor free space, run the *Structured Query Language command* "sp_helpdb <database name>" on a regular basis or use the *Sybase Central* – > Databases – > <database name> segments
- Add space when the free space is close to or below 10 percent of the total allocated space. The data-to-log ratio should be approximately five-to-one
- Monitor the amount of physical hard-drive space on your server when creating new devices to expand your database. Be proactive in planning for the future of your database. Do you anticipate an increased workload in the future? Feel free to contact the SPS Help Desk with any questions regarding free space and/or planning for the future, regarding your server(s)

Performance:

- Run *Update Statistics, Re-Org/Compact Table scripts* via Script-Aid on a monthly basis. No users should be connected to your database when these scripts are run, since this will adversely affect any processes attempting to update the database

Don't Be Caught Unprepared

Even the savviest System Administrators cannot fully control what happens to their server/database. Please don't be caught unprepared saying, "It can't happen to me." A solid backup and contingency plan is a site's first line of defense — protecting against the unexpected!

Fast Track to the Coveted "Green Light"

Pre-Deployment Packages Coming Soon

Despite some setbacks that have made the PD² Version 4.2 Increment 2 upgrade seem distant — the time is rapidly approaching when sites will be required to submit the familiar Self-Upgrade Package to the Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) for review and approval. As sites near their scheduled upgrade dates, they will receive a list of pre-deployment package components that must be submitted to (and approved by) the JPMO before beginning the upgrade.

In order to properly prepare for the upgrade, every site must receive a "green light" status from a JPMO representative. Obtaining this status may seem daunting, but it's probably the most important part of the upgrade process — ensuring that no preventable problems are present and that all hardware/software is compatible with the new version.

Below is a list of tips to help obtain the "green light" as quickly and painlessly as possible:

- Perform the database-maintenance procedures recommended by CACI as often as prescribed. If any errors exist in your site's backup, error or DBCC log files, report them to the SPS Help Desk immediately. DO NOT wait until the last minute to troubleshoot known errors, as this will likely result in the delay of your upgrade date. All errors in any of the submitted logs must be resolved before the JPMO can "green light" a site.
- Check the usage of your database to ensure enough space is available at all times. While the footprint of the upgraded PD² software on client workstations is only slightly larger, data is inserted into the database during the upgrade that will lower the total amount of free space left in the data segments of the database. Sites should expand their database when the total amount of free-space drops below 10-15 percent of the total space
- Complete all required fields in the JPMO's *Pre-Deployment Survey*. All server information and special site requirements should be noted in this document to allow for proper assessment of the site's hardware/ software as compared to the guidelines set forth in the JPMO's Increment 2 requirements. If any required fields are left blank on the survey, the package will be assigned a "yellow" or "red" status until a form with all fields completed is submitted and reviewed
- Submit a single package with ALL required documents and files together as early as possible. The JPMO will not review an incomplete package — dramatically slowing down the process of obtaining the coveted "green light" status

Based on previous upgrades, these tips should cut down on the overall time you spend preparing for the upgrade. Please feel free to contact the SPS Help Desk to discuss any Increment 2 upgrade questions you may have — we're almost there! ●

— Mr. George Chavis, Army SPS Desk Officer



Service Talk: Navy and Marine Corps

SPS Deployment and Training Update

All Marine Corps and Bureau of Medicine and Surgery sites have completed their upgrades to Version 4.2 Increment 2 (v4.2.2). Well done to the support teams who assisted the sites with these upgrades.

The consolidated Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) database in Tulsa, Okla., will be the last Department of the Navy site that needs to be upgraded. After testing in May, their upgrade will be scheduled for later in the month or early June. For the first time in the history of the Standard Procurement System (SPS) program all Navy and Marine Corps sites will be on the same — and most current — version of Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²)!

In conjunction with NAVSUP, the Naval Facilities Command, Commander, Fleet Industrial Supply Centers (FISC), the Joint Program Management Office (JPMO), the Army and the Navy Component Management Office, we have pieced together training on v4.2.2 for FISC users worldwide. As of this writing, SPS classes are being conducted in Yokosuka, Japan, and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and the JPMO mobile training classroom is being used in San Diego, Calif., and then Puget Sound, Wash., for hands-on v4.2.2 sessions and running the v4.2



U.S. Marine Corps Engineers and U.S. Navy Seabees work alongside members of the Thai Army to raise a framework of rebar as they build a bridge in Ban Jingeenuean, Thailand.

computer-based training CD. The mobile classroom will head to the East Coast in early May to provide training for FISC personnel in Philadelphia, Pa., Norfolk, Va., and Jacksonville, Fla.

Navy Response Team Tips of the Trade

Copying and Pasting Text:

When creating an add-text clause or attachment, it's sometimes convenient to copy and paste text from one Word document to another. However, in these

Service Talk: Navy and Marine Corps [continued]

cases, it is also possible to bring more than just the desired text into the new document. Hidden formatting data can have a negative impact on how the document will print. In order to avoid this issue, always use the *Paste Special* command in place of the *Paste* command. When *Paste Special* is selected, another dialogue box will open. At this point select *Unformatted Text*. These steps will ensure that only the desired text in the original document will transfer to the new document and there will be no printing issues.

Install Script Aid at an NMCI Site:

Script Aid is not packaged for distribution under the Navy-Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI). This means that a user cannot simply have it "pushed" to his/her desktop. As a workaround, some of our sites have installed Script Aid on the Application Support Facility server and then created a desktop shortcut to the executable on the appropriate desktops. This will allow a site to continue to use Script Aid even under NMCI.

Working in the *Clauses Tab*:

When switching back and forth between the *By Reference* and *By Full Text* radio buttons in the *Clauses tab* of a document, some users may notice that the clauses will automatically re-sort, sending them back to the top of the page immediately. This can make working in the *Clauses tab* a tedious task, especially for a document that contains many clauses. To stop PD² from doing this, minimize any open documents and go to *Utilities > Preferences*. In the *Procurement box*, there is a selection for *Auto Sort Document* that will need to be unchecked. Once completed, users can go back into the

Clauses tab of their document and switch back and forth between the *By Reference* and *By Full Text* radio buttons without having the clauses immediately re-sort. When finished making changes, click on the *Sort* button at the bottom of the window to manually re-sort the clauses.

Metrics Reminder

Each month sites using SPS in production are required to post their monthly SPS metrics (operational users, number of awards and dollars obligated) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy Acquisition Metrics [Web site](#).

Desk Officer Still Around!

Contrary to what I wrote in the previous "Service Talk" for *The SPS Connection* the contract IBM has with the Program Executive Office for Information Technology was extended to May 31, 2005, and is in the process of being extended through the government fiscal year. Thanks to all for the many good wishes, which were sent in, and I look forward to continuing to work with everyone and being your "point man" in the JPMO offices. ●

— [Mr. Eric Ferraro](#), Navy/Marine Corps SPS Desk Officer

Service Talk: Air Force

AFCEP: On the Way to Your Desktop

The Air Force Increment 1 Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²) Business Procedures (AFPBP) is going through a slight makeover. The procedures are being updated to include both the Standard Procurement System (SPS) Increment 2 functionality and non-SPS program business procedures for the first time. The document has also been renamed the Air Force Contracting E-Business Procedures (AFCEP).

The Secretary of the Air Force Contracting Business Systems Division, Air Force Contracting Information Systems (AFCIS), Functional Requirements Board and the Air Force Customer Service Team came together at Patrick Air Force Base the week of March 21-25 to revise the current AFPBP document.

The three key areas of discussion were how to incorporate Air Force-level metric reporting into inspection processes, a new "Zero Defects" initiative to standardize Major Command (MAJCOM) data collection/ reporting to the Secretary of the Air Force Contracting and the goal of having the AFCEP published and available to the user



Airmen with the 366 Fighter Wing in Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, load a plane deploying to a forward operating location.

community by the end of May. Special thanks to all who attended and participated in this rewrite.

New E-Business Systems

Incorporated into the AFCEP:

- Electronic Document Management/ Equipment Facility Requirement (EDM/EFR)
- Navy-Air Force Interface (NAFI)
- EZ-Query
- Federal Technical Data Solutions (FedTeDS)
- Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps)

Service Talk: Air Force [continued]

- Automated Contract Preparation System (ACPS)
- Contracting Writing System (ConWrite)
- Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²)
- Unique Identification (UID)
- Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA)
- Automated Business Support System (ABSS)
- Wide Area Work Flow (WAWF)
- Federal Procurement Data System – Next Generation (FPDS-NG)
- Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS)
- Business Partner Number (BPN)
- Air Force Way (AFWay)
- Integrity
- DD Form 350 (DD350)

IAPS Interface: Recently Updated to Support Your Site Mission

The SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) recently approved an AFCIS-developed update to the Air Force SPS Integrated Automated Payable System (IAPS) interface. The goal of this update is to reduce the amount of time required to run the interface at each Air Force Base.

The specific update is to a stored procedure used by the IAPS interface when executing. The stored procedure update has been packaged by the SPS JPMO/CACI and delivered to AFCIS. AFCIS Remote Database Administrators (RDBAs) have been working to apply this update Air Force-wide. Please contact your MAJCOM lead or AFCIS RDBA

member if you have not applied this update. This updated, stored procedure is supported by the CACI/SPS Help Desk.

Special thanks to AFCIS for identifying a user community need and taking immediate action to develop a solution to support your mission. ●

– Ms. Susan Haskew, Air Force SPS Desk Officer



Coming Soon: Increment 3

The release of Version 4.2 Increment 3 (v4.2.3) may seem far off but, in reality, it's just around the corner. The Joint Program Management Office staff is already planning for v4.2.3.

To keep you informed, we're starting a series of articles that will introduce you to the new look, feel and terminology coming with Increment 3. Each article will provide information in an effort to acquaint you with the new environment and will concentrate on different aspects of the application. To the right is the beginning of your venture into the Increment 3 environment. We will start off with some very simple items related to the application and then move into some new terminology.

See the charts for a comparison between today's environment and tomorrow's application.

Application

Increment 2	Increment 3
Client/Server	Web Based
Desktop, Cabinets and Folders	Ownership of Task
Form Based Entry	Formless Entry
Tabs	Expandable Sections

Terminology

Increment 2	Increment 3
User	Principal
Release	Process
Save	Held
Pre-Approval Checks	Verify
Wildcard %	Wildcard *
Generate	Render
Local Fields	Extensible Fields
Menus and Toolbars	Menu Sitemap* and Toolbars

**The Menu Sitemap is an additional method of navigation featured in Increment 3. Toolbars will remain on each page for easy movement from one screen to another. Similar to a Web site map, the sitemap option specifies where each content area is located in the system.*

DTRA Successfully Tackles the V4.2.2 Learning Curve

The Standard Procurement System (SPS) is currently striving to deploy Version 4.2 Increment 2 (v4.2.2) of its Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²) software to all users by the end of 2005. Though the upgrade from v4.2.1 to v4.2.2 will ultimately benefit users, growing pains exist because of functionality changes in the new version that force users to adopt new processes, changing some of the practices they were accustomed to in Increment 1.

According to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), which upgraded the first week of January, early communications is essential to tackling the v4.2.2 learning curve. All 60 of the agency's procurement professionals have been awarding contracts with minimal problems using the new version since the first day of DTRA's deployment. "Early communications to the users is the key to everything," says DTRA Contract Policy Chief, David Miller.

Advance Notice Eases the Transition for DTRA's Contracting Professionals

In October, three months prior to the upgrade, DTRA System Administrators (SAs) began distributing Increment 2 release notes to users on a regular basis. The release notes are provided by the Joint Program Management Office to sites scheduled to



upgrade and outline the system's new functionality.

SAs encouraged contracting personnel to pay attention to the notes by simplifying the lengthy document into a one-page executive summary, making the information less time consuming to review. Eventually, they identified 10 key points from the release notes, which were bulleted in the body of an e-mail, and the release notes document — in its entirety — was attached.

"You should keep the release notes simple and try to explain them as best you can," advises DTRA's Technical SA Nick Arnone, an onsite consultant from CACI. "You have to let everyone know in advance, when an

DTRA Successfully Tackles the V4.2.2 Learning Curve [continued]

upgrade will require users to get accustomed to new functionality and alter business processes."

For example, in earlier versions of SPS' Procurement Desktop-Defense software, the modification number served as the item tracking number. However, in v4.2.2, the modification control number is the tracking number. This change could potentially throw off users at first, but drawing their attention to the change before the new software is implemented can curb confusion.

DTRA supplemented the release notes by uploading additional resources, including the v4.2.2 training CD provided by SPS and frequently asked questions, to a shared drive where users could access them at anytime. SAs advocated these extra resources by referring to them often when addressing users.

Following the upgrade, the agency's contracting workforce transitioned quickly to Increment 2 with little trouble or concern thanks to their SAs' persistence in bringing their attention to new functionality. Despite the easy transition, SAs continued to send out release notes to make sure users remained attentive to functional changes after the upgrade was complete.

Two-Way Communications: Users and SAs Discuss New Functionality Openly in Users' Group

Arnone and Ms. Pat Muncy, Procurement Systems Analyst and Functional SA, reinstated DTRA's SPS Users' Group immediately after the upgrade. Arnone describes the users' group as a give-and-take organization where users ask questions

and voice concerns about SPS, and those on the policy-side of operations, the SAs for example, have the opportunity to respond and educate users about functionality and processes.

The users' group is fundamentally about addressing anything concerning SPS from both sides. However, meetings since the upgrade have focused mainly on v4.2.2's functionality, such as the integrity tool.

A Smooth Upgrade for DTRA

For DTRA, the upgrade itself involved a migration to a new Windows 2000 server in addition to installing the Increment 2 software. DTRA did not install the Adapter, since the agency does not require its functionality. In addition to their responsibilities of executing the upgrade, SAs coordinated an effort to replace everyone's Windows NT workstations with XP workstations, which kept everyone busy transferring their files during the downtime. The entire process took the agency approximately seven days to accomplish.

"We were upgrading to Windows XP workstations throughout the agency, migrating our data to a Windows 2000 server and upgrading to a new version of SPS, plus testing the new server and new increment," explains Muncy. "It was an amazing amount of work that got accomplished in just seven days with minimal problems."

Arnone and Muncy both recall everyone at DTRA having an upbeat and positive attitude towards the upgrade. And that, they agree, was a huge factor in the smooth execution of the self upgrade. ●



Blended Vision: New Project Manager for Training Takes Learning Styles into Account

"People have different learning styles," is a principle that Ms. Martina Johnson, an eight-year veteran of the Standard Procurement System (SPS) program, is thinking about critically these days, as she gets comfortable in her new position as SPS training project manager. Formerly the project manager for integrations, Johnson became training manager effective April 1.

Johnson's vision is to change SPS' training strategy to a blended approach, meaning in the near future users will have the choice between instructor-led, video-based or Web-based training. Traditionally, SPS has brought users up-to-speed on new software releases and introduced new users to the program through instructor-led courses at the Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) in Fairfax, Va., and, on occasion, at individual sites. Now, the SPS training program is moving towards an SPS University concept that empowers users through offering a selection of training tools:

- Web-Based Training (WBT)
- Video-Based Training (VBT)
- Computer-Based Training (CBT)
- Instructor-Led Training (ILT)
- Contract Line Item Number (CLIN) Work
- Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²) Advisor, an instructional application

within the PD² software that is found in the PD² directory

Extending Training to More Users Through VBT and WBT

SPS is currently developing VBT DVDs and WBT in hopes of reaching a greater number of the program's more than 23,000 users worldwide. VBTs are basically video-taped versions of current instructor-led course offerings, topics include:

- Contracts
- System Administration
- The Adapter
- Reports
- Database Management

"Many of our users are not able to come to our office in Fairfax, Va., to take courses, and we're not able to visit every site due to funding reasons. VBTs and WBTs allow our users to access training from anywhere, anytime and any place, when they need it," explains Johnson. "We call it 'just in time training.' Our users can learn on demand, at their own desks and at their own pace."

However, Johnson assures that users who prefer instructor-led to virtual training are not to worry. Once VBT hits the screens, the

Blended Vision [continued]

program office will continue to support CLIN work, meaning trainers from the JPMO will visit sites upon request to teach courses. In addition to having training come to them, sites specify what topics are covered based on their business practices, and they may even request a specific class be taught in its entirety.

"The program office is changing its training strategy to better reach its broad user base, yet by taking a blended approach (offering VBT, WBT and instructor-led training), users have the ability to learn based on their learning style," says Johnson.

Futuristic Training Solutions in the Works for Increments 2 and 3

While the JPMO's current training offerings include five instructor-led courses, taught in Fairfax, Johnson says, VBTs for Increment 2 and WBTs for Increment 3 are in development and will be available soon. Here's how the training strategies for the latest versions of SPS breakdown:

- **V4.2.2:** Instructor-led training is available and VBT DVDs are in development, which are meant to help users sustain their knowledge of Increment 2.
- **V4.2.3:** Web-based training for Increment 3 is already in production and will be available in time for users to acclimate themselves to the new version before testing begins. SPS has connected with the Army Distance Learning System to provide the online training, which users will access through their Army Knowledge Online accounts. Though training for Increment 3 will be heavily Web-based, Johnson

assures, "We're definitely planning to provide instructor-led training in addition to Web-based courses."

Additionally, the training team is working closely with the change management team in order to benefit from training's far-reaching capabilities to better manage the transition to a new software build. Due out soon is a "familiarization" WBT, which gives users the opportunity to begin getting comfortable with Increment 3.

More Information on Training Available

For the latest course offerings and more information on where training is headed, Johnson advises users to logon to the [SPS Center of Excellence Web site](#). The [SPS Knowledge Base](#) is another valuable resource for training information.

She also invites users to [contact her](#) directly. "I want to give the user community the best training solution possible, and I need their support and help in allowing me to better understand their needs as our learning community," Johnson says. "Training is the backbone of the SPS program. If training fails, everything fails." ●

Navy Embraces Wynne's V4.2.2 Upgrade Mandate

Last July, Mr. Michael Wynne, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, then Acting, endorsed upgrades to Procurement Desktop-Defense (PD²) Version 4.2 Increment 2 (v4.2.2) in a memo to Department leaders stating, "Upgrades of the current SPS (Standard Procurement System)/PD² user base to Version 4.2.2....shall be completed by April 30, 2005."

RADM Martin J. Brown, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (DASN) for Acquisition, embraced Wynne's mandate and all Navy sites completed the upgrade by the end of April, with the exception of the Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP), which just missed the deadline due to a reallocation of resources causing a much larger server consolidation than expected. Still, that's 98 percent completion by the deadline — a major feat for the Department of the Navy that puts it ahead among the Services for upgrade progress.

NAVSUP is hoping to upgrade to v4.2.2 by mid-June meaning that for the first time since the Department of the Navy originally deployed SPS in 1997, all Navy and Marine Corps sites will be on the same version of PD².



During an Acquisition Claimant Council meeting last January, CAPT Cynthia Varner, Director, DASN Acquisition E-Business Policy Branch, expresses appreciation to users who tested v4.2.2. Varner is among the Navy leadership committed to DoD's goals for business systems standardization.

Navy Leadership Commits to Acquisition Domain's Goals

The Navy's success in meeting the Department of Defense's (DoD) goals for SPS is due largely to buy-in from top leadership. According to Navy SPS Component Management Officer Chuck Mills, RADM Brown has taken personal interest in tracking the Navy's progress implementing v4.2.2 since Wynne's memo was delivered last summer. "RADM Brown is committed to meeting the Acquisition Domain's goal of having a standard system

Navy Embraces Wynne's V4.2.2 Upgrade Mandate [continued]

for contracting," notes Mills. CAPT Cynthia Varner, Director, DASN Acquisition E-Business Policy Branch, is also vigorously committed to realizing DoD's goals for business systems standardization.

A Common Database Leads to Cost Savings

The Navy will benefit from cost savings as a result of deploying v4.2.2 across-the-board. "Sharing a common database positions the Navy for business intelligence, which allows us to lump commodities and reduce costs," explains Mills.

Business intelligence is an organization's ability to identify similar purchasing needs among its units in order to benefit from reduced prices at larger quantities. With such cost savings in store, it's no surprise DoD plans to use this capability to the taxpayer's benefit once everyone is on board with standard systems. SPS' business intelligence potential is one of the reasons Wynne encourages use of the system.

The Navy also reduced its total number of SPS server sites by nearly 50 percent as a result of deploying the same PD² version throughout the Service. "We started out in 2003 planning for 110 physical server locations," Mr. Eric Ferraro, the Navy SPS Desk Officer, says, "and by consolidating hardware and operations we've reduced the number to 56 server locations." ●

Ask the Editor

Have a burning question about SPS? We want to hear from you.

The SPS Connection's goal is to deliver useful, timely information about the Standard Procurement System (SPS) to users on a regular basis. However, we're aware there are a lot of questions out there that we're not addressing. So, we've opened a new section in the newsletter for you, the readers, to send in your questions about the Program in general, functionality, related acquisition programs, etc. and a member of the team at Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) will respond.



I would like to hear about COGNOS Report Writing groups within the Department of Defense. Specifically, who they are; what they are working on and how we can request assistance with reports.

— Ms. Linda Barvinchak, Procurement Desktop-Defense Functional Systems Administrator, Defense Finance and Accounting Service

The SPS Reports Working Group (RWG) reports their issues to the Joint Requirements Board. The members are from various DoD installation(s) – they are workers on the ground level who know the COGNOS tool, not management. Their function is to ensure that standard reports created by COGNOS (and Business Objects for Increment 3) are reflective of each of the services needs. However, a service (or site) is free to write their own, individual reports, which are called "ad hoc" reports and are for local use only. Standard reports can be used by any service, any site – they're standard. As for their current action items, you'll have to get that from the RWG themselves. Requesting assistance regarding reports is a matter of contacting your Desk Officer who elevates the issue to his/her respective RWG representative, who then speaks on the matter at the RWG itself.

— Mr. George Chavis, Army SPS Desk Officer

Is there a Web-based or CD ROM training program available?

— SMSgt Joel Howard, Contracting Officer

Currently, SPS is developing Video-based training (VBT) DVDs and Web-based training (WBT) to extend training courses to a larger number of users. VBT will be

Ask the Editor [continued]

available soon to help users sustain their knowledge of Version 4.2 Increment 2. The courses that are being offered are the same as today's instructor-led training: Contracts, System Administration, Adapter, Report Writing and Database Maintenance. Additionally, a familiarization WBT for Increment 3 will allow users to see how the new software functions, shows differences between Increment 2 and Increment 3 and highlights various procurement actions. Additionally, the Joint Program Management Office will offer WBTs for Increment 3 in time for users to take courses before testing the new version. The WBTs can be accessed on the Army Distance Learning Management System.

To find the latest information on training, logon to the [SPS Center of Excellence](#) or visit the [SPS Knowledge Base](#). ●

— Ms. Martina Johnson, SPS Training Project Manager

Ms. Martina Johnson is the new project manager for SPS training. Read about her vision and strategies for Increment 2 and 3 training in this issue's feature on training .



The SPS Connection

May/June 2005

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Click here to send your SPS-related comments, questions or issues to SPS Desk Officers.

The SPS Connection welcomes all articles, photos and letters from SPS users and the community at large. Please send your input to [The SPS Connection Editor](#).

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SPS Socket Results



Have you plugged into the socket yet? Cast your vote below.

Help us plan for the next SPS joint users' conference! Visit the [COE](#) and share your preferences by filling out the SPS JPMO Conference Survey. For example, in your opinion, what is the ideal month to hold the next conference?

- ☐ January 2006
☐ February 2006
☐ March 2006
☐ April 2006

 [Submit](#)

May/June

Help us plan for the next SPS joint users' conference! Visit the [COE](#) and share your preferences by filling out the SPS JPMO Conference Survey. For example, in your opinion, what is the ideal month to hold the next conference?

January 2006

4%

February 2006

11%

March 2006

62%

April 2006

22%

45 respondents

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